

Department of Community and Regional Planning
Iowa State University
Strategic Plan for 2015-20

Approved May 2015; Revised Feb 26, 2016

VISION

The Iowa State University Department of Community and Regional Planning will be nationally recognized for professional planning education, research and outreach that integrate design, policy and engagement to build more sustainable and equitable places.

MISSION

Our mission is to improve communities/places and create globally aware citizens through innovative teaching, research and community engagement.

We *educate* students to become professional planners, critical thinkers and engaged global citizens who have the ability to contribute to a better world.

We partner with planning practitioners to *discover and implement* best practices to enhance the human experience and improve the natural, social and built environment.

We *engage with communities* to create vibrant and sustainable places.

We promote *place-based research and inquiry* in Iowa and the Midwest.

VALUES

We value critical and creative thinking, ethics, social justice and equity, environmental and social responsibility, democratic values, diverse perspectives, collaboration, innovation, uniqueness and interconnectedness of places/people.

GOALS

1. Recruit, retain and graduate high-quality and diverse graduate and undergraduate students.
2. Strengthen students' critical thinking, analytical, technical and communication skills.
3. Enhance students' ability to effect change in a global, multicultural and diverse world.
4. Prepare students who enter the profession of planning to engage in life-long learning and professional development.
5. Conduct innovative faculty and student research that advances planning for more equitable and sustainable communities.
6. Strengthen the planning profession through the dissemination of cutting-edge research and best practices and providing opportunities for continuous learning.
7. Provide opportunities for faculty and students to collaborate with communities to plan a better future.

Goals, Tactics and Action Plan for 2015-20

The mission statement defines who we are, what we do and how we do it. The department has been working over the course of several years to develop a set of student learning outcomes for the Bachelor of Science in Community and Regional Planning (BSCR) and Master of Community and Regional Planning (MCRP) programs. As a result, the department's curriculum goals and objectives (stated below) are a reflection of formally implementing these activities.

Goal 1: Recruit, retain and graduate high-quality and diverse graduate and undergraduate students.

Tactics/Objectives

- a. Increase recruitment at the undergraduate level to achieve 40 students in each cohort in five years.
- b. Increase recruitment at the graduate level to achieve 20 students in each cohort in five years.
- c. Increase the diversity of students (racial and ethnic background) enrolled in all our programs.
- d. Improve the department's web presence and other social media recruitment celebrating departmental accomplishments.
- e. Develop a departmental recruitment program to help increase recruitment from within the College of Design, across the university and beyond the university.
- f. Increase the number of students who take planning courses as electives.
- g. Create and implement an Urban Studies Minor by 2016.
- h. Create and implement a GIS Minor by 2016.
- i. Increase enrollment in our double-degree graduate programs (MCRP/MARCH; MCRP/MBA; MCRP/MLA; MCRP/MS).
- j. Increase our online/distance education course offerings.
- k. Increase number of articulation agreements for transferring into the CRP program to at least five community colleges within the next five years.

Goal 2: Strengthen students' critical thinking, creative abilities and communication skills.

Tactics/Objectives:

- a. Assess student learning in written, oral and visual communication through CRP 599/699.
- b. Implement student self-assessment measures to track progress toward degree completion.
- c. Enforce standards for academic achievement via departmental minimum GPA and progress toward degree completion.
- d. Revise and improve curriculum based on student learning measures and assessment.

Goal 3: Enhance students' abilities to effect change in a global, multicultural and diverse world.

Tactics/Objectives:

- a. Increase the number of students who take advantage of study abroad opportunities or other international experiences.
- b. Focus learning on understanding of cultural, diversity and social justice issues through select coursework (ex, CRP 391, CRP 561, CRP 566).
- c. Integrate opportunities for developing ethical judgment throughout curriculum (e.g., CRP 383, CRP 492, CRP 561, CRP 566).
- d. Use studio classes to expose students to diverse cultures.
- e. Encourage internship experiences that expose students to diverse cultures.
- f. Create and sustain funding opportunities for students to support study abroad.

Goal 4: Engage students in life-long learning and professional development.

Tactics/Objectives

- a. Initiate job-preparation mentoring program with alumni to help prepare seniors and graduate students to improve their marketability.
- b. Expose students to careers in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.
- c. Solicit Planning Advisory Council (PAC) input regarding skill development and best practices (every other year).
- d. Involve professionals in course work and lectures.
- e. Provide interdisciplinary and experiential learning through active learning pedagogy, class projects, internships and/or studios.
- f. Implement assessment of professional work in core curriculum subject to measures of student learning.
- g. Engage students in Extension workshops.
- h. Prepare students for professional development (e.g., CRP 498: Portfolio Development and Review class).
- i. Improve American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) pass rate by offering exam preparation classes/learning materials to alumni.
- j. Survey alumni every five years to assess career development and department's contribution to lifelong learning.

Goal 5: Conduct innovative faculty and student research that advances planning for more equitable and sustainable communities.

Tactics/Objectives

- a. Expand and strengthen our relationships within the college, across the campus and with organizations across the region to help engage in interdisciplinary research.
- b. Increase faculty productivity, including publications, conference presentations, etc.
- c. Increase faculty success in securing research funding.
- d. Increase faculty involvement in multidisciplinary applied research projects.
- e. Increase faculty representation on the editorial boards of professional journals.
- f. Organize at least one major regional conference within the next five years.
- g. Expand the use of cutting-edge technology to improve learning and research in the

department and the college.

Goal 6: Strengthen the culture of planning through the dissemination of cutting-edge research and best practices and providing opportunities for continuous learning for professional and citizen planners.

Tactics/Objectives

- a. Organize workshops for planners and other stakeholders.
- b. Provide continuing education opportunities for planners.
- c. Use web-based communication technologies to inform and update planners, policy makers and communities about cutting-edge planning solutions.
- d. Produce technical reports and other publications for disseminating research findings.
- e. Engage with professional associations and government entities in search for solutions to community challenges.
- f. Expand the department's reach through activities across the state of Iowa and beyond.

Goal 7: Provide opportunities for faculty, student and community collaboration to plan a better future.

Tactics/Objectives

- a. Involve students in service-learning projects through assistantships, internships and outreach studios.
- b. Disseminate the research knowledge produced by the faculty to decision makers at local, state, regional and national levels.
- c. Offer educational programs in the areas of planning and community development to at least 50 Iowa communities annually.